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To: Board of Education
From: District Accountability Committee
Re: DAC Concerns for Proposed Budget for 2026-2027
Date: March 27, 2026

Good afternoon, Board of Education,

As you prepare for the upcoming budget cycle, we appreciate the difficult decisions that lie ahead and the responsibility you carry in balancing fiscal constraints with the needs of students and staff. On March 17, 2026, the District Accountability Committee received a presentation from Kara Drake on the 2026–2027 school year budget. Following that presentation, DAC members discussed what they believe should be the district’s priorities for the coming year. We would like to share the areas we feel are essential to preserve, as well as those where thoughtful reductions could be considered.

Priorities to Preserve

We strongly recommend maintaining funding for the following core components of student learning and support:

- Tier 1 instruction, which forms the foundation of academic success for all students
- Special Education staffing, ensuring compliance, appropriate services, and equitable access
- Early-intervention screening, which reduces long-term costs and improves student outcomes
- Co-teaching and cross-training models, which strengthen instructional quality and flexibility
- Instructional hours, which directly impact learning time and student achievement

These elements are central to the district’s mission and have a measurable impact on student growth and well-being.

Areas for Potential Reductions or Review

We also believe there are opportunities to reduce costs or increase efficiency without compromising essential services:

- Technology purchases for younger students, particularly iPads/Chromebooks, where usage may not justify ongoing replacement cycles
- High school Pathways class, or similar programs across schools that may not demonstrate clear value or alignment with district priorities
- A comprehensive audit of technology systems, identifying platforms or subscriptions that can be eliminated or consolidated
- Administrative staffing costs, with an eye toward efficiency and role clarity
- Accelerate school consolidation, where appropriate, to reduce overhead and improve resource allocation
- Avoiding purchases driven by novelty rather than need, such as Yonder pouches or other non-essential initiatives

Our goal is not to diminish innovation, but to ensure that every expenditure is tied to student learning, safety, or operational necessity.

We offer these recommendations in the spirit of partnership and responsible stewardship. We recognize the complexity of this work and appreciate your commitment to making decisions that best serve our students, families, and staff.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Lorna Frey
DAC Chair